

(**Washington D.C.**) - Congressman Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (D-VA-03) voted today in favor of H.R. 3963, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act of 2007.

The bill re-authorizes the State Children's Health Insurance Plan (SCHIP), which currently provides health insurance to 6 million children in America who would otherwise be uninsured.

Congress voted to continue funding SCHIP exactly one month ago, but that bill was vetoed by President Bush. A congressional attempt to override the veto failed last week. Today, Congress voted on a similar bill to continue SCHIP, but with slight changes to address many of the concerns articulated by the President.

"Like the bill we passed last month, H.R. 3963 increases the number of children receiving coverage by over 3 million, but still only reaches one-third of the 9 million children currently uninsured in America. We still have a long way to go," said Rep. Scott. "I am disappointed that we are still debating whether children deserve access to quality health care," added the Congressman, who supports expanding health coverage to all uninsured children in America.

The bill passed today differs from the bill passed last month in a number of ways, including limiting SCHIP enrollment to those below 300% of the poverty level and requiring childless adults to transition off SCHIP. "We find ourselves having to scale back the bill until we have enough votes to make it law," explained Rep. Scott. "But it's still a step in the right direction."

Like the last bill, this bill is paid for by an increase of the Federal Excise Tax on Tobacco. Rep. Scott remains concerned over this particular provision:

"This tax disproportionately affects low-income individuals and is therefore regressive.

It is unfortunate that Congress would raise this tax by \$7 billion a year; at the same time, we cut taxes this year by over \$50 billion for families making over \$170,000."

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